



Campbell River Indian Band  
1650 Old Spit Rd.,  
Campbell River, BC  
V9W 3E8  
250-286-6949

We Wai Kai Nation  
690 Headstart Crescent,  
Campbell River, BC  
V9H 1P9  
250-914-1890



---

**For Immediate Release**

**June 18, 2020**

**We Wai Kai and Wei Wai Kum Nations Call for Immediate Cancellation of Finfish Aquaculture Tenure –  
Implementation of Collaborative Governance for farms in Laichkwiltach Territory**

**Laichkwiltach Territory, Campbell River BC**

The recent escape of over 1000 Atlantic salmon from a finfish aquaculture site in Johnstone Strait has resulted in a call to cancel the provincial tenure. In a letter of June 9, Chief Brian Assu of We Wai Kai and Chief Chris Roberts of We Wai Kum advised the provincial government of the need to close the Shaw Point site, which has been operating by MOWI Inc. on a month-to-month basis since the expiry of the tenure.

“That site no longer has our consent to operate within our core territory,” said Chief Assu, “we have advised the government that we expect the cancelation of the tenure and the remediation of the site to commence.”

The escape at Shaw Point comes on the heels of efforts by We Wai Kai and We Wai Kum to develop a structure for collaborative governance of the finfish aquaculture industry in their territories. To date, the Province has failed to engage substantively. “We have tried to build on the work done by Nations in the Broughton Archipelago and negotiate a decision-making agreement that is based on the best science, the best data and the knowledge that our communities have,” said Chief Roberts, “but we need BC to be a partner in this.”

The escape of Atlantic salmon, the delay in notifying the Nations about the escape, and the ongoing concerns about the impacts of sea lice on juvenile migrating salmon has brought this issue to a head. “The system is broken,” said Chief Assu. “We cannot stand by and wait for BC to implement the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, or for DFO to protect our vital resource. Our Nations have a right to wild salmon and the right to make decisions about how our territory is used. We will exercise that right, starting with the site at Shaw Point.”

“For countless generations, our people have cared for, harvested and relied on salmon as they return to our local spawning grounds and as they migrate through Laichkwiltach waters to many rivers, including the Fraser,” continued Chief Roberts. “We are ready to exercise our right as decision makers and stewards over our lands and waters. We hope that government will partner with us in a meaningful way to achieve real progress.”

Media Contact: Chief Brian Assu (250-287-9460)  
Chief Chris Roberts (250-286-6949)

---